

VOL. XIV, PP. 145-148

AUGUST 9, 1901

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW OCELOT FROM TEXAS AND NORTHEASTERN MEXICO.

BY EDGAR A. MEARNs.

Comparison of the ocelots in the United States National Museum Collection shows the single form represented from the United States and northern Mexico to be distinct from those to the southward. None of the numerous names hitherto applied to members of the *Felis pardalis* group of long-tailed cats relate to this animal.* It has heretofore been supposed to be

*The name *Felis albescens* of Pucheran, Voyage Venus, Zoology, mammifères, etc., p. 149; atlas, pl. VIII, 1855, is a pure substitution for the *Felis brasiliensis* of Frederic Cuvier, which latter was based on a specimen received from Cuba, and supposed to have been brought thither from Brazil. Although Pucheran mentions and describes a male specimen sent from Arkansas, in the State of Louisiana, by Trudau, he distinctly states that his name *albescens* is a substitution for *brasiliensis* of Fr. Cuvier, of which it therefore becomes a synonym.

Under the name *Panthera ludoviciana*, Fitzinger, the compiler, describes an intensely-colored ocelot, similar to Hamilton Smith's colored figure 'No. 3,' and gives its range as North America, Louisiana and Arkansas. The animal described (*Sitzungsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien*, LIX, 1869, p. 258) is smaller, with heavy black markings and reddish-brown coloring above, obviously differing from the form here described. The synonymy is composite, including *Felis tigrina* Erxleben and the Mexican ocelot figured in Griffith's edition of Cuvier's Animal Kingdom as variety No. 3 of Hamilton Smith. Pucheran's *Felis albescens* is not given as a synonym, although a specimen from Arkansas is described.

identical with the *Felis pardalis* of Linnaeus, which was based primarily on the 'Cato-Pardus mexicanus' of Hernandez.

Felis limitis sp. nov.

RIO GRANDE OCELOT.

Type adult male, No. $\frac{32679}{44602}$, U. S. National Museum, Biological Survey Collection, taken at Brownsville, Texas, March 4, 1892, by Mr. F. B. Armstrong. Original No. 102.

Characters.—Smaller and grayer than *Felis pardalis* Linnaeus, with coloration less intense. Skull relatively broad; dentition weaker; interpterygoid fossa wider and more quadrate; audital bullæ wider and more inflated; postorbital process more flattened and less depressed.

Color.—Winter pelage: Upperparts exquisitely lined and spotted with black on a drab-gray ground. The ground color varies from whitish drab-gray on the unenclosed areas to pale broccoli brown on those that are enclosed or margined with black. The pattern is never exactly the same on any two specimens, although the general effect is similar. There is a distinct vertebral area marked with black, usually appearing as a more or less broken or irregular line of black on the posterior three-fifths, breaking up into parallel or divergent lines or spots anteriorly; it is usually apparent from the occiput to the root of the tail, though always an interrupted line. In places, especially on the rump, it often becomes a single or double row of black spots, while anteriorly it may change to parallel lines or elongated enclosures. On each side of the vertebral line is a parallel series of enclosed or (occasionally) solid black elongate areas, sometimes containing black spots. Succeeding these, laterally, are series of elongate, partially or completely enclosed spots or irregular bands of drab-gray having a trend downward and backward, and separated from one another by grayish-white areas, an especially broad transverse one usually appearing behind the shoulder. Upper side of neck with longitudinal black stripes enclosing drab-gray areas anteriorly and usually open posteriorly. Upper side of head with a broad black, usually interrupted line arising about ten millimeters above the middle of the orbital ring and extending backward on either side to opposite the middle of the ear; between these lateral bands are several interrupted lines of spots, larger behind and breaking up into small spots anteriorly. Eyelids blackish, bordered above and below by whitish bands, succeeded by drab-gray. Side of head with two conspicuous black longitudinal stripes, the upper one commencing as a black spot behind nostril, another in front of inner canthus and involving upper and lower eyelids, extending thence to a point about thirty millimeters below and behind the posterior root of the ear; lower stripe, beginning behind whiskers and below middle of orbit, extends backward to behind ear, then transversely across under side of head, almost joining the corresponding stripe of the opposite side. The space between these black lines is white except anteriorly; that between the up-

per one and the lateral crown stripe forms a large drab-gray triangle, between the eye and ear, in which there are but few small black spots. Muzzle, above plain drab-gray, lined on sides with spots of black edged with drab, and plain grayish white posteriorly. Whiskers mostly white, some becoming brownish black at base. Ear with concavity well coated with whitish-buff hairs; convexity black anteriorly, grayish white posteriorly, the latter encroaching on the middle of the black area, forming a rounded spot, which, in one individual, is narrowly encircled by black posteriorly, cutting it off from the whitish posterior third of the ear. Outer surface of limbs transversely spotted with black, the spots decreasing in size from within outward, becoming obsolete on the toes. Underparts white, very slightly tinged with ochraceous, the pelage drab-gray at base; chin and throat, middle of neck, and belly between thighs, unspotted. Under side of neck with two transverse bands of black slightly mixed with fulvous, interrupted at median line. Hind part of neck finely spotted with black; chest and belly coarsely spotted, the black spots rounded on chest and transversely elongated on abdomen. Inner surface of limbs, whitish, transversely spotted with black. Under side of feet, hair brown, sometimes mixed with hoary. Tail, whitish gray, speckled with black below; upper surface irregularly barred with light and dark bands, the former grayish white, the latter drab-gray, edged with black, and somewhat grizzled; light rings averaging about ten.

The description of color is based on skins from Fort Clark and Brownsville, Texas. Six from the latter locality were kindly loaned me by Doctor C. Hart Merriam, Chief of the Biological Survey, U. S. Department of Agriculture. These specimens are quite similar except that one immature female (No. 32,681) is remarkable for intensity of the black markings. All were killed in February and March. The summer pelage appears to be more tawny than that of winter; but the available summer skins are unreliable, having been immersed in a fluid that has probably changed the color. For the same reason, no satisfactory comparison of coloration can now be made with *Felis pardalis*.

Skull and teeth.—Compared with *Felis pardalis* Linnaeus the skull of *F. limitis* is smaller, relatively short and broad, the postpalatal fossa averaging considerably wider and more quadrate, the audital bullae much broader and more inflated, and the postorbital processes more flattened and less depressed. The skull of the type, an old male of maximum size, measures as follows: basilar length (Hensel), 114 mm.; zygomatic breadth, 93; width of audital bulla, 17; length of upper lateral toothrow, measured on alveoli, 40; upper premolar series, 28; upper incisor series, 15; crown of upper carnassial tooth, 15.8 by 7.8; crown of middle upper premolar, 10 by 5; lower lateral toothrow, 45. A younger, nearly adult male (No. 7083, U. S. National Museum), from Mirador, Mexico, is considered to represent *Felis pardalis* Linnaeus, and presents the following dimensions: basilar length, 122; zygomatic breadth, 91; width of audital bulla, 16; length of upper lateral toothrow, 43.5; upper premolar series, 30; upper incisor series, 17; crown of upper carnassial

tooth, 16.7 by 8.3; crown of middle upper premolar, 11 by 6.4; lower lateral toothrow, 50; but a strictly comparable male skull (No. 14,180, U. S. National Museum), from Talamanca, Costa Rica, gives the following measurements: basilar length, 134; zygomatic breadth, 108; width of auditæ bullæ, 16.3; length of upper lateral toothrow, 47; upper premolar series, 31; upper incisor series, 17; crown of upper carnassial tooth, 17 by 9.3; crown of upper middle premolar, 11 by 6.5; lower lateral toothrow, 53.

Measurements.—Type (old male): length, 1080 mm.; tail vertebræ, 330; length of hind foot, 160; ear above crown, 50. Females average about as follows: length, 950; caudal vertebræ, 300; hind foot, 145; ear above crown, 50. Skulls: greatest diameters of largest male, 140 by 93; largest female, 126 by 87.

Specimens examined.—Seventeen, from the following localities: Fort Clark, Kinney County, Texas, 1; Eagle Pass, Texas, 2; Fort Ringgold, Texas, 1; Brownsville, Texas, 6; Matamoras, State of Tamaulipas, Mexico, 7.